

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee – Room 150 LRWFC & Zoom
January 23, 2025 @ 12:00pm

PRESENT

Members Present: Eddie Davis, Earnest Merritt, Roland Haynes (proxy for Darlene Owens), Kristi Barr, Shannon Frieri (proxy for Kathy Fulks)

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Tanisha Lawson, Shannon Rast

LRWDB Attorney: Mary Scott Timmis

Equus Workforce Solutions: Rani Cooksey

Guests: Kimberly Oliver (LR Job Corps), Andrea Wynne (LR Job Corps), Thomas Pittman (AWC), Brian Rodgers (AR DCOM DWS)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES: Eddie Davis called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm and roll call was issued. It was determined that a quorum was present with 5 members. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes from September 26, 2024 were reviewed and approved. A Motion was made to approve the minutes by Earnest Merritt and seconded by Kristi Barr. **RESOLVED:** Executive Committee unanimously were in favor to approval the September 2024 Minutes.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORT:

Executive Director Monagle gave the updates from the Ad Hoc Compliance Committee in place of member Bryan Day due to his absence. He spoke about the meeting that was held between LRWDB staff and Little Rock's City Finance Director and staff. We have been working diligently with the city's finance administrator to resolve any concerns they may have regards to remaining as their fiscal agent. Bryan Day gave the committee a memorandum to finalize a few points, review, and send to the Mayor. Director Monagle stated that the work is being done and to expect an update soon.

Executive Director Monagle gave a brief explanation to why there was a need for the committee to vote on a new EEO Officer. The Executive Committee then voted to fill that position. A Motion was made by Earnest Merritt and seconded by Kristi Barr to appoint Rani Cooksey as the new EEO Officer.

RESOLVED: Executive Committee unanimously were in favor of Rani Cooksey as the new EEO Officer.

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee - Mr. Earnest Merritt spoke about updates on the LRWFC Partners Advisory Committee meeting. He spoke about all the different partners that have moved in the building with about 180 employees. A copy of the minutes from that meeting was included.

Youth Services Committee – no updates

Services to People with Disabilities Committee – no updates

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT:

Mrs. Rani Cooksey, Project Director, reported on Equus Workforce Solutions December 2024 goals and what was accomplished since the last meeting. She asked attendees to refer to the report attached to the meeting packet. Adult/Dislocated Worker enrollments are 27/60, Youth enrollments are 15/30, and Foster/Homeless Youth enrollments are at 5/10. Mrs. Cooksey stated that the measures set for Youth Occupational Skills Training is at 4/4 and Adult Occupational Skills Training is at 20/30. She spoke about the Workforce Center's Meet & Greet for the eligible training providers that will be held on January 30th. It will give the providers an opportunity to become familiar with the different agency and what they offer within the workforce center.

Project Director Cooksey spoke about the Rock City Re-entry Pathway Home 3 program. There are 283 participants enrolled (231 follow-up, 52 discharged). She reported that 86 completed Forklift training, 52 completed Heavy Equipment Operator, 24 completed Warehouse Inventory and Logistics, and 72 completed Future Fit classes. They currently have 37 participants in Work Experience Training. She shared the participant's success story of Rajhan Gantt (Pathway Home 3).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Executive Director WJ Monagle provided a synopsis of the Executive Director's report (see attached report for details). He stated that the Arkansas Community Organizations are providing free tax preparation services to the community from January 21st thru April 15th. They will be providing these services only on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday every week.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next full LRWDB meeting will be on February 27, 2025

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 pm.

Approved by:

LRWDB Chair

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – Room 150 LRWFC & Zoom
February 28, 2025 @ 12:00pm

PRESENT

Members Present: Eddie Davis, Bryan Day, Abby Holsclaw, Martie North, Sharon Cantrell, Kristi Barr, Earnest Merritt, Larry Schleicher, Brian Provencher, Darlene Owens, Kimberly Oliver, Christie Ison, Shannon Frieri, Will French (proxy for David Stephens), Jherrithan Duke (proxy for Edie Stewart)

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Tanisha Lawson, Shannon Rast

LRWDB Attorney: Mary Scott Polk Timmis

Equus Workforce Solutions: Rani Cooksey

Guests: Antwan Phillips (LR City Board)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES: Eddie Davis called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm. A roll call was issued, and it was determined that a quorum was present with 12 members. Three additional board members arrived (Martie North, Will French (proxy for David Stephens) and Darlene Owens). That brought the board members present to 15 members. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The LRWDB ratified the Executive Committee appointment of Rani Cooksey as EEO Officer.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes from August 15, 2024 were reviewed and approved. A Motion was made to approve the minutes by Christie Ison and seconded by Bryan Day.

RESOLVED: Board members unanimously were in favor of approval of the August 2024 Minutes.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORT:

Chairman Eddie Davis gave an introduction for Antwan Phillips from the Little Rock City Board. Mr. Phillips explained that he is an attorney at Wright, Lindsey & Jennings, his various duties working with the city, and sitting on the board. He spoke about workforce issues in our city and what is being done to make it better. Director Monagle gave an overview of the different partners that are housed in the One-Stop Center.

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee – Earnest Merritt stated due to inclement weather, the last meeting was cancelled. He announced that Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) were moving into the building today and tomorrow.

Youth Services Committee – Chairman Eddie Davis stated that there is still a need to fill the Chairperson position for the Youth Services Committee. He asked the board members to consider individuals that they know who may be interested in filling the position.

Persons with Disabilities Committee – Darlene Owens stated no committee updates but that Arkansas Rehabilitation Services was continuing its process of moving into the building

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT:

Mrs. Rani Cooksey, Project Director, reported on Equus Workforce Solutions PY24 goals update on what was accomplished since the last board meeting. She asked attendees to refer to the report attached to the meeting packet. Adult/Dislocated Worker enrollments are 32/60, Youth enrollments are 15/30, and Foster/Homeless Youth enrollments are at 5/10. Mrs. Cooksey stated that the measures set for Youth Occupational Skills Training are at 6/4 and Adult Occupational Skills Training are at 22/30. She spoke about the Center-wide Training that was held with ARS on February 11th. The training gave the partners in the facility an understanding of the variety of training and career preparation programs that are being offered for individuals with disabilities.

Project Director Cooksey spoke about the Rock City Re-entry Pathway Home 3 program. There are 283 participants enrolled (231 follow-up, 52 discharged). She reported that 86 completed Forklift training, 52 completed Heavy Equipment Operator, 24 completed Warehouse Inventory and Logistics, and 72 completed Future Fit classes. They currently have 37 participants in Work Experience Training. She shared the participant's success story of Ronald Franklin (WIOA Adult).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Director Monagle went over the financial statements that were provided in the members' packet. He answered questions that were asked and then the board voted on whether to approve the financial statements.

- Approval of the PY24 LRWDB, Equus, and RCRG Pathway Home 3 Financial statements (Action Item). **RESOLVED:** A Motion was made to approve the PY24 LRWDB, Equus, and RCRG Pathway Home 3 Financial statements by Christie Ison and seconded by Darlene Owens, the LRWDB unanimously approved.

He provided a synopsis of the Executive Director's report (see attached report for details).

ADJOURNMENT: Upon a motion made and duly seconded, unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting of the LRWDB was adjourned at 1:04 pm.

Approved by:

LRWDB Chair

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Executive Committee – Room 150 LRWFC & Zoom
March 27, 2025 @ 12:00pm

PRESENT

Members Present: Eddie Davis, Earnest Merritt, Darlene Owens, Kristi Barr, Kathy Fulks

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Tanisha Lawson, Shannon Rast

LRWDB Attorney: Randall Bynum

Equus Workforce Solutions: Rani Cooksey

Guests: Thomas Pittman (AWC), Ronnie Kroepfl (AWC)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES: Chairman Eddie Davis called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm and roll call was issued. It was determined that a quorum was present with 5 members. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes from January 23, 2025 were reviewed and approved. A Motion was made to approve the minutes by Kathy Fulks and seconded by Kristi Barr.

RESOLVED: Executive Committee unanimously were in favor of approving the January minutes.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORT:

Executive Director Monagle gave updates from the Ad Hoc Compliance Committee in place of Bryan Day due to his absence. He spoke about the PY19 WIOA Audit being resolved and the final determination of the PY20 WIOA Audit. The committee is still working to resolve the outstanding findings for the PY21 WIOA Audit. The PY22 WIOA Audit has not been received from the state as of this date.

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee - Mr. Earnest Merritt spoke about updates at the LRWFC Partners Advisory Committee meeting. He was unable to attend but he received a synopsis from Mrs. Dollie Fountain on the topics. They spoke about the restructuring of the safety teams for the workforce center, emergency response planning, and the new digital check-in log at the entrance of the facility.

Youth Services Committee – no updates

Services to People with Disabilities Committee – Mrs. Darlene Owens spoke about the 8 councilors that are now housed at the workforce center, work that some of them are doing in the local high schools, and the current open positions within the organization.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT:

Mrs. Rani Cooksey, Project Director, reported on Equus Workforce Solutions February 2025 goals and what was accomplished since the last meeting. She asked attendees to refer to the report attached to the meeting packet. Adult/Dislocated Worker enrollments are 48/60, Youth enrollments are 34/30, and

Foster/Homeless Youth enrollments are at 19/10. Mrs. Cooksey stated that the measures set for Youth Occupational Skills Training are at 10/4 and Adult Occupational Skills Training are at 37/30. She spoke about a fun employee morale event that Equus created called Spirit Week at the Workforce. It starts April 7th through April 11th. Each day of that week dictates a fun thing staff at the center could do if they chose to participate. Also, the workforce center will hold a Meet & Greet for the agencies within the workforce center. It will be held on April 11th from 9:00 am through 10:00 am. It will give each agency a platform to showcase the different services they have to offer participants. She reminded the board about the Centerwide Training: Active Shooter that will be held on April 8th from 9:00 am – 11:00 am.

Project Director Cooksey spoke about the Rock City Re-entry Pathway Home 3 program. There are 283 participants enrolled (218 follow-up, 65 discharged). She reported that 86 completed Forklift training, 52 completed Heavy Equipment Operator, 24 completed Warehouse Inventory and Logistics, and 72 completed Future Fit classes. They currently have 37 participants in Work Experience Training. She shared the participant's success story of Demontre Scott (WIOA Youth program).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Executive Director WJ Monagle provided a synopsis of the Executive Director's report (see attached report for details). He spoke about the annual audits that Forvis Mazars have yet to complete and asked the board if they wanted him to submit an RFP for our auditing services. The board stance for now was to give Forvis Mazars another chance to complete the outstanding audits.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next full LRWDB meeting will be on April 24, 2025

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 pm.

Approved by:

LRWDB Chair

Date

MINUTES

Little Rock Workforce Development Board
Full Board Meeting – Room 150 LRWFC & Zoom
April 24, 2025 @ 12:00pm

PRESENT

Members Present: Eddie Davis, Abby Holsclaw, Martie North, Sharon Cantrell, Kristi Barr, Rachel Ball (proxy for Earnest Merritt), Brian Provencher, Darlene Owens, Christie Ison, Will French (proxy for David Stephens), Kathy Fulks, Jonathan Graham

LRWDB Staff: W.J. Monagle, Tanisha Lawson, Shannon Rast

LRWDB Attorney: Randall Bynum

Equus Workforce Solutions: Rani Cooksey

Guests: Angelica Holmes (UA-PTC Project Coordinator), Tom Pittman (AWC), Ronnie Kroepfl

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/WELCOMES: Eddie Davis called the meeting to order at 12:18 pm. A roll call was issued, and it was determined that a quorum was present with 12 members. The audience was welcomed and reminded that the meeting was being recorded for assistance in preparing the minutes.

RATIFY ACTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The LRWDB Executive Committee voted to ratify WJ Monagle (Executive Director) retaining the authority to submit a RFP for Audit Services, if Forvis does not deliver on their contractual duties. A Motion was made to approve retaining the authority to WJ Monagle by Christie Ison and seconded by Kathy Fulks. **RESOLVED:** Board members unanimously were in favor of approval of retaining authority.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes from February 27, 2025 were reviewed and approved. A Motion was made to approve the minutes by Kathy Fulks and seconded by Christie Ison. **RESOLVED:** Board members unanimously were in favor of approval of the February 2025 Minutes.

CHAIR AND COMMITTEE REPORT:

Chairman Eddie Davis introduced Mrs. Angelica Holmes, UA-PTC Project Coordinator. Mrs. Holmes explained that she is going around the state to spread the word about Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Cohort that is starting this fall, and applications were now open. Goldman Sachs Foundation is looking for business owners that are looking to grow and expand, especially in rural areas. She gave a synopsis of the program and offered some flyers with more detail about the cohort. She stated if anyone was interested, please reach out to her. Director Monagle asked Mrs. Holmes to send the information to him and he would send it out to the board members.

One-Stop Partners Advisory Committee – Rachel Ball (proxy for Earnest Merritt) stated that on April 8th the Little Rock Police Department held an active shooter training at the center. A fire drill was held, and it was successful.

Youth Services Committee – Darleen Owens has offered to be the Youth Services Committee chair.

Persons with Disabilities Committee – no updates

Performance, Compliance & Resolution - Executive Director Monagle let the board know that we are continually working to resolve any disallowed costs that were identified in other monitoring reports, that have not been closed, or a final determination was received.

WIOA SERVICE PROVIDER/ONE STOP OPERATOR'S REPORT:

Mrs. Rani Cooksey, Project Director, reported on Equus Workforce Solutions PY24 goals and what was accomplished since the last board meeting. She asked attendees to refer to the report attached to the meeting packet. Adult/Dislocated Worker enrollments are 51/60, Youth enrollments are 36/30, and Foster/Homeless Youth enrollments are at 20/10. Mrs. Cooksey stated that the measures set for Youth Occupational Skills Training are at 10/4 and Adult Occupational Skills Training are at 37/30. She stated that there are more things coming soon and they are listed on the Equus Calendar included in the member's packet.

Project Director Cooksey spoke about the submittal of Rock City Re-entry Pathway Home 6 grant application. She stated that Rock City Re-entry Pathway Home 3 program has 283 participants enrolled (283 follow-up, 65 discharged). She reported that 86 completed Forklift training, 52 completed Heavy Equipment Operator, 24 completed Warehouse Inventory and Logistics, and 72 completed Future Fit classes. They have 37 participants in Work Experience Training. She shared the participant's success story of Lisette Hernandez (WIOA Adult).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Director Monagle spoke about the recent tornadoes and storms that did damage in Arkansas. He noted that FEMA declined to declare Arkansas a disaster area. The LRWDB is hoping that the storms that hit Arkansas around April 1st will help FEMA to reconsider declaring Arkansas a disaster area. He told the board members that he received a letter of non-compliance from the state that had to do with the board certification process. He let the board know that all required documentation has now been submitted to the state.

Director Monagle provided a synopsis of the Executive Director's report (see attached report for details). He went over the remaining balances of the PY24 LRWDB, Equus, and RCRG Pathway Home 3 financial statements that were provided in the members' packet. He spoke about the need to shift up to \$20,000.00 from the reserve funds to be negotiated with Equus to cover expenditures for direct participant related training costs only. He answered questions that were asked and then the board voted on whether to approve the movement of funds.

- Approval of up to \$20,000.00 increase to Equus for training related costs only (Action Item).
RESOLVED: A Motion was made to approve up to \$20,000.00 by Will French (proxy for David Stephens) and seconded by Kathy Fulks, the LRWDB unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon a motion made by Kathy Fulks and duly seconded by Sharon Cantrell, the LRWDB unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The meeting of the LRWDB was adjourned at 1:02 pm.

Approved by:

LRWDB Chair

Date